

PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN



11-12

PLAN FOR 2011-12

**LABOUR RELATIONS AND
WORKPLACE SAFETY**

MINISTRY PLAN FOR 2011-12

Statement from the Minister



Saskatchewan's Government is committed to a secure and prosperous province where the safety and rights of workers are protected. As Minister responsible for Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, I am pleased to present the Ministry's Plan for the upcoming year, which is in alignment with the Government's direction for 2011-12.

The initiatives outlined in this Plan speak to this year's budget theme, the *Saskatchewan Advantage*, which contribute to the Province's goals of economic growth, security, and keeping Government's promises. The Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety (LRWS) provides a variety of programs and services that benefit both workers and their employers, and is committed to the economic well-being of individuals and businesses and ensuring continued economic growth in the province. Through education and enforcement,

LRWS is protecting the safety and rights of Saskatchewan workers. LRWS also works with stakeholders to ensure our programs are effective, efficient and transparent, and are meeting the needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

To achieve these goals in 2011-12, LRWS will:

- foster productive, safe and competitive workplaces through investigations, inspections, conciliation, mediation and appeals;
- work with key stakeholder groups to discuss labour policy development in Saskatchewan; and,
- improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ministry's programs, services and systems to ensure the best use of public funds.

I accept responsibility for furthering our Government's commitments while ensuring the Ministry is managed with integrity and professionalism, with a commitment to the Government's corporate values and principles. Examining programs and services to ensure the most effective and efficient delivery possible is a key priority for all ministries and an activity that will be reported as results are achieved.

I will continue working on the commitments outlined in my 2010 Mandate Letter from Premier Wall to ensure Saskatchewan's citizens continue to enjoy a quality of life that is the envy of the rest of Canada.

I will report on the progress made toward this Plan, within the financial parameters provided to my Ministry, in the Ministry's annual report.

The Honourable Don Morgan
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

Response to Government Direction

Government's plan for the upcoming year is described in the *Government Direction for 2011-12: The Saskatchewan Advantage*. The 2011-12 Budget supports this plan by maintaining and improving our quality of life through enhanced public services and creating more opportunities for all Saskatchewan citizens. Responsible fiscal management means finding the right balance between debt reduction, tax relief, investing in short-term capital infrastructure projects, and matching program spending to long-term, sustainable revenues.

Meanwhile, Government continues to promote effectiveness and efficiency throughout the public service; is continuing with its four-year plan to reduce Government's footprint; and has adopted a "Lean" culture of continuous improvement in the delivery of programs and services.

Ministry Plans for 2011-12 support the fulfillment of Government's **vision for a secure and prosperous Saskatchewan, leading the country in economic and population growth, while providing opportunity for a high quality of life for all**. Government's goals and priorities for the upcoming year are described in the *Government Direction* document, as well as in each ministry plan.

The Plan for 2011-12 communicates a high-level framework for the Ministry's key activities in the upcoming year. All ministries and agencies will report on results achieved or not yet achieved, in their annual reports, to honour Government's commitment to keep its promises, and to ensure greater transparency and accountability to Saskatchewan people.

Mission Statement

The Ministry supports sustained economic growth and prosperity through the provision of a range of services that encourage, promote and enforce safe work practices and employment standards, which foster a fair and balanced employment environment that respects the rights, duties and responsibilities of employees and employers, thereby ensuring healthy, safe and productive workplaces.

Strategies and Actions

Government Goal – Economic Growth

Sustain Economic Growth for the benefit of Saskatchewan people, ensuring the economy is ready for growth and positioning Saskatchewan to meet the challenges of economic and population growth and development.

Strategy

Foster a competitive and productive labour environment by ensuring the use of best practices

Key 2011-12 Actions

- Ensure Saskatchewan's employment and occupational health and safety regulatory regime is competitive through legislative review, and by working with stakeholders and jurisdictional counterparts such as the Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation (CAALL).
- Work with CAALL to address issues raised by the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- Facilitate the use of averaging permits for industries and employees seeking more flexible work schedules.
- Work with counterparts in British Columbia and Alberta to identify and promote best practices in employment and occupational health and safety standards under the New West Partnership.
- Contribute to Canada's development of labour standards proposals with respect to the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).
- Educate employers and employees about employment standards in Saskatchewan.
- Provide conciliation and mediation services to employers and unions requesting assistance to resolve disputes or conclude negotiations to establish or renew collective agreements.

Government Goal – Security

Secure Saskatchewan as a safe place to live and raise a family where people are confident in their future, ensuring the people of Saskatchewan benefit from the growing economy.

Strategy

Encourage healthy and safe workplaces by setting, promoting and enforcing provincial occupational health and safety (OHS) and employment standards

Key 2011-12 Actions

- Perform OHS workplace inspections to ensure compliance with legislation and regulations.
- Continue to work with stakeholders and workplaces to implement the recommendations from the Workplace Responsibility System review.
- Continue to work with the Ministry of Agriculture on the voluntary injury prevention and risk assessment program for farm and ranch operations.
- Continue to work with Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) to develop injury prevention strategies through *WorkSafe Saskatchewan*.
- Provide support and assistance to the development of an occupational health and safety program within executive government to ensure compliance with the 2010 Health and Safety Leadership Charter.
- Continue to educate youth on OHS and employment standards through the Young Worker Readiness Certificate Course.
- Ensure enforcement and compliance of employment standards and timely resolution of complaints.
- Ensure the Office of the Workers' Advocate (OWA) meets the needs of stakeholders through the timely resolution of compensation appeals.
- Support efforts to educate injured workers about the workers' compensation system and the role of the OWA.
- Encourage the adoption of best practices by workplace partners in the areas of employment practices, occupational health and safety and labour relations.

Government Goal – Promises

Keep Government's Promises and fulfill the commitments of the election, operating with integrity and transparency, accountable to the people of Saskatchewan.

Strategy

Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ministry's programs and services to ensure the best use of public funds

Key 2011-12 Actions

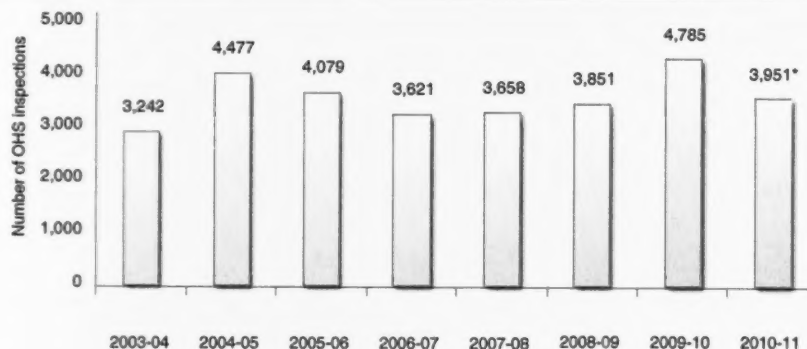
- Support the activities of the Workers' Compensation Act Committee of Review (COR) in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Continue to improve service delivery and management practices to better respond to the needs of clients.

Performance Measures

Measure

Total number of Occupational Health and Safety inspections per fiscal year

Baseline / Trend Line Information



*2010-11 results as of January 31, 2011

Measure Description

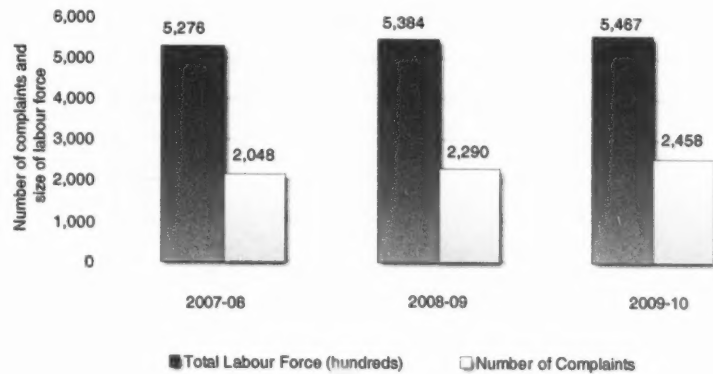
The Ministry plans and performs worksite visits in Saskatchewan workplaces to verify and enforce compliance with occupational health and safety legislation. Occupational Health Officers work with workplaces and their Occupational Health Committees and OHS representatives to identify potentially unsafe or hazardous working conditions to ensure safe, healthy and productive workplaces

Worksites are selected for routine inspections through risk analysis based on the type of industry and the number of injuries occurring in a workplace. Other inspections are done in reaction to incidents or complaints. The number of inspections the Ministry performs depends on the resources available (i.e. number of officers trained), the number of investigations required, and the demand for workplace educational events.

Measure

Number of complaints filed with the Labour Standards Division relative to Saskatchewan's total labour force

Baseline / Trend Line Information



Measure Description

This measure provides insight into the level of compliance with the labour standards legislation. Though the graph above illustrates the aggregate number of complaints, the Labour Standards Division is able to extract industry specific information which helps the Ministry in reallocating and refocusing resources towards achieving greater compliance.

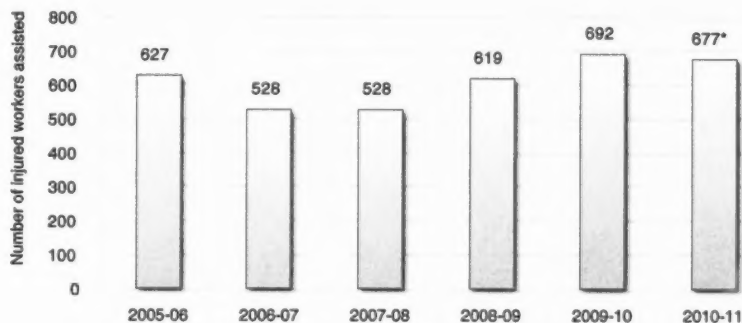
A low number of complaints about suspected labour standards infractions (i.e. wage, holiday pay, dismissal etc.) filed with the Labour Standards Division suggests workplace support and adherence to labour standards legislation. Compliance with labour standards legislation is a key element in protecting the rights of workers, building a level playing field for employers, and promoting a stable labour climate within the province.

The graph above illustrates that complaints have been rising at a higher rate relative to the increasing labour force in Saskatchewan.

Measure

Number of injured workers provided assistance with respect to their WCB claims

Baseline / Trend Line Information



*2010-11 results as of January 31, 2011

Measure Description

The Office of the Workers' Advocate (OWA) is mandated under *The Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) Act* to provide assistance to injured workers in respect to a claim being advanced for compensation. Early intervention and positive outcomes for these injured workers is a key contributor in fostering healthy and productive workplaces.

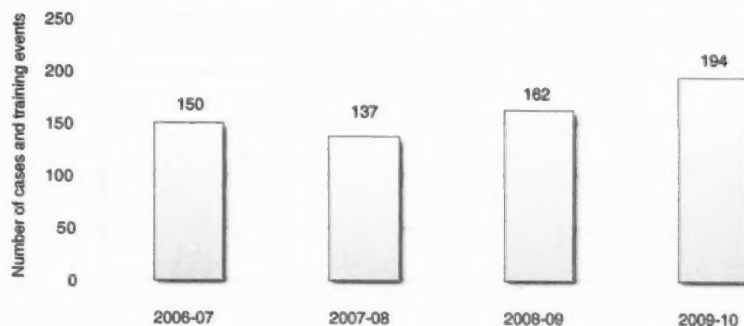
This measure illustrates the number of Saskatchewan injured workers who have approached the OWA for assistance with WCB claims. While there are more claims than the numbers illustrate here, not all claimants will require the assistance of the OWA. The numbers in the graph above only indicate those who have sought assistance.

By providing effective assistance and advocacy on WCB claims disputes or appealable issues, the OWA is able to foster more timely and equitable resolutions. This contributes to the overall effectiveness of the workers' compensation system, to the health of the injured worker, and to the productivity of the businesses involved.

Measure

Total number of cases and training events provided by the Labour Relations and Mediation (LRM) Division

Baseline / Trend Line Information



Measure Description

The LRM Division is responsible for bridging the differences between employers, employees and trade unions.

The measure is indicative of the demand for mediation services provided by the LRM Division. It provides insight into the number of conciliations, interest based negotiations, workplace mediations, grievance mediations, training sessions (conflict resolution and interest based negotiations) and Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board (SLRB) votes handled by the LRM Division each fiscal year.

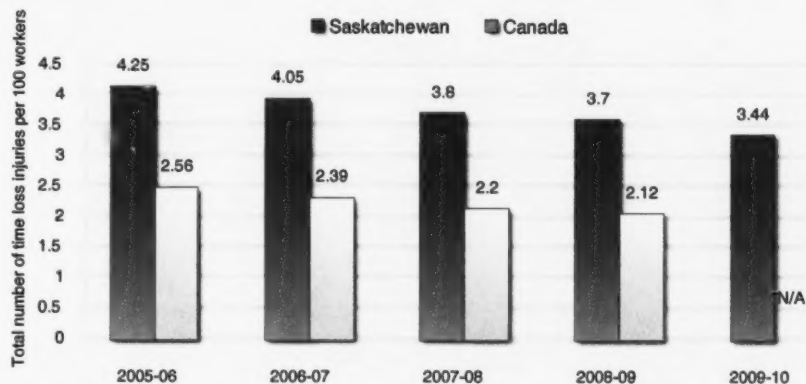
Due to the nature of the services offered by LRM, demand by clients is cyclical with years of low-levels of demand proceeded by years of high-levels of demand. As illustrated by the graph above, the recent trend in demand for mediation services has been increasing over the past few years.

2011 Industry Measures

Measure

Baseline / Trend Line Information

Time-loss injury rate (per 100 full-time equivalent workers)



Measure Description

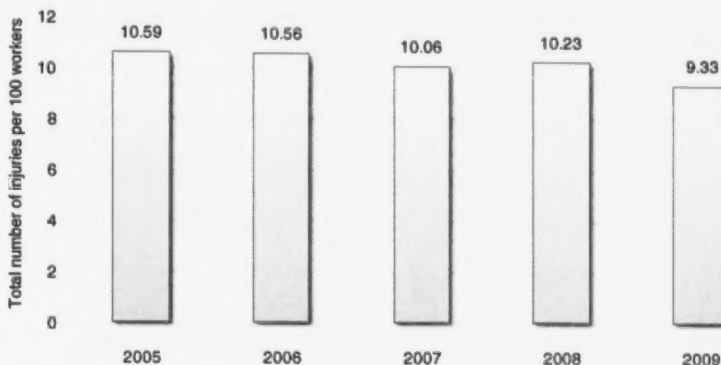
This measure provides an indicator of the relative number, type and severity of workplace injuries in comparison to the average for the rest of Canada. It measures the number of lost-time injuries (workplace injuries that result in time away from work) reported to, and accepted by, the WCB per 100 full-time equivalent workers. A reduction in the number of lost-time claims indicates fewer workers being injured on the job. The data is based on WCB statistics, focuses on traumatic events such as injuries rather than illnesses, and does not cover all workers. The Ministry has limited direct influence on the overall workplace injury rate. Different industries have different reported injury rates. Changing demographics and rapid industry growth influence workplace injuries and illnesses, which can affect the overall rate.

Safe, healthy workplaces are a key contributor to economic growth and prosperity. While the workplace time-loss injury rate shows a continual decrease from 2002 to 2009, Saskatchewan has the second highest workplace injury rate in Canada. Government can influence this rate through safety awareness efforts including public advertisements, injury prevention campaigns and through enforcement of labour legislation.

Measure

**Total injury rate
(per 100 full-time
equivalent workers)**

Baseline / Trend Line Information



Rate is per 100 Full-Time Equivalent Workers

Measure Description

WorkSafe Saskatchewan has established a total injury rate based on the number of injuries reported to and accepted by the WCB. It identifies injuries that involve both time loss and no time loss, expressed as a portion of 100 full-time equivalent workers. A reduction in the number of total claims indicates fewer workplace incidents and can be used to assess movement toward achievement of Mission: Zero¹, the elimination of work-related injuries and illnesses. Using WCB statistics means this measure focuses on traumatic events (for example, injuries rather than illnesses). It does not cover all workers.

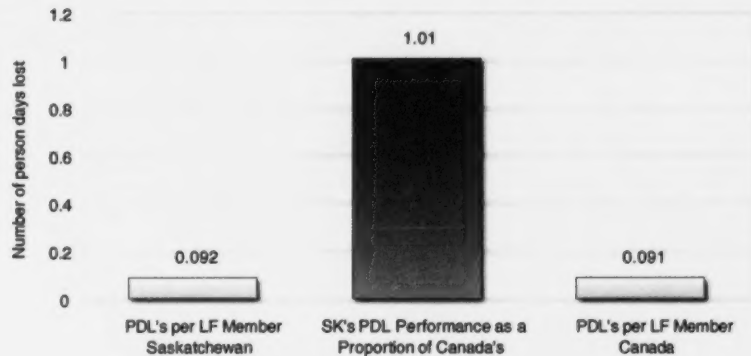
Government can influence the total injury rate through public education, maintenance of Occupational Health Committees and workplace inspections. But, the Ministry has limited direct influence on the overall workplace injury rate due to a variety of reasons including: different reported injury rates per industry, changing demographics and rapid industry growth.

¹ For more information on Mission: Zero, please see <http://www.worksafesask.ca/>

Measure

Saskatchewan's person-days lost performance as a proportion of Canada's

Baseline / Trend Line Information



As of 2009

Measure Description

This measure is an indicator of the relative degree of labour stability in Saskatchewan compared to Canada as a whole. It reflects the number of person-days lost (PDL) due to strikes and lockouts as a proportion of the Saskatchewan labour force (LF), and compares this with the number of person-days lost as a proportion of the Canadian labour force.

A score of 1.0 indicates the degree of labour stability in Saskatchewan is on par with Canada as a whole. A score of less than 1.0 indicates relative labour stability (fewer days lost per capita) compared to the rest of Canada, and a score of greater than 1.0 indicates relative labour instability.

To show how Saskatchewan's person-days-lost performance compares with Canada as a whole, a standard is accomplished by dividing the average number of days lost in Saskatchewan by the average number of people in the Saskatchewan labour force over a three-year span. This same standard is developed for Canada as a whole.

To achieve the performance as a proportion, Saskatchewan's standard is divided by Canada's. A result of greater than 1.00 indicates that Saskatchewan's person-days lost performance is slightly higher than the Canadian average.